

The Good Word

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF BRECKSVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WHAT'S INSIDE...



Staying Connected



Livestreaming Services



Loving God & Loving Others

WE CAN DO HARD THINGS...STILL

In the January newsletter, I reminded us that we can do hard things. I didn't exactly know what that would look like, but whoa... when I wrote those words I was not expecting a global pandemic, and learning new phrases like "shelter in place" and "flatten the curve." I was expecting us to go through a visioning process as a church, discerning how God has uniquely created Brecksville United Methodist Church to bring God's hope and love to the surrounding area.

Sometimes I laugh at how God works. We had it all planned out: we had a book, a committee established (because we're good Methodists), and were ready to spend the next year praying, meeting, and digging into who the people of Brecksville UMC are. And just as we were about to dive into the hard work, the world shut down.

Looking back, it seems like God was saying, "Your plans are cute. But how about I take away all your normal ways of doing things

and being the church, and let's see what's left. Let's see who you really are." Because in the past month, I've seen who this church really is.

We are a group of people who naturally connect with one another.

We are a group of people with servants' hearts.

We are a group of people who value authenticity over perfection.

We are a group of people who LOVE gathering together. BUT we are not a group of people who need

Continued on next page...

worship online

SUNDAYS AT 9 AM

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Help us tell God's story as it unfolds in our church and community. Send us your news!

a building in order to be the church.

These simple truths have become apparent in the few short weeks we've been physically distant from one another...

We created Connection Groups to try to connect as many people as possible while we're apart, but keep learning of ways you connect with one another on your own. (Good job!)

We gathered (6-feet apart!) to deliver palms for Palm Sunday and had more people willing to serve than we needed. (Thank you!)

We did a goofy "social distancing palm parade," and you all loved it. (I love this about us!)

We can't gather in our building, but we are STILL worshipping, supporting and encouraging one another, and serving our community in any way we safely can.

I'm not surprised; just impressed.

I'm going to say it again: we can do hard things. I know it's been hard to be away from each other as a church, to do everything differently than normal. And I know we are each personally working through grief, sadness, and uncertainty. In January I told you I was going to run a half marathon in April. That did not happen. I blame COVID-19 and the fact that life got hard. But I've started running again, and with every run I remember we can do hard things. We do not live through our own power, but through the power of Jesus. Thanks be to God!

Pastor Heidi

Rev. Heidi Welch, Senior Pastor

THE MEMBERSHIP JOURNEY

The United Methodist Church

These individuals are finishing up our Membership Class and will be welcomed as new members as soon as we gather together as a church family!

Dion & Tracy Adanich

David & Emily Gardner

Barb Sindyla

Alison Bellone

Marla Knight

David & Susan Slaby

Paul, Michelle, Matthew
and Hannah Botzman

Matthew Mellott

Cathy Suk

Mandy Rozman

We also have several other individuals who are interested in becoming members and are working through the classes! If you're interested in learning more about membership in the United Methodist Church, contact us!

Equipping Our Ministry for the Future

On Thursday, March 12, Governor DeWine and the Ohio Board of Health issued an order limiting the size of group gatherings to help slow the spread of the Covid-19. Two days later, Brecksville United Methodist Church hosted our first online worship service. It was a crash course in live streaming technology!

Since then, Pastor Heidi and a skeleton crew have produced worship services to illuminate the word of God, enlighten, engage, and keep us connected to one another—including special services for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

We have seen a fantastic response in viewership and have been amazed by the ways we're connecting with people through online services. Each week, see familiar names tune in, along with new people from our community and further afield! Online worship also makes it possible for so many others to join us—our snowbirds, people whose health or other limitations have kept them from church, people who have moved away, and our family and friends.

All these people are part of our church family now, and we want to ensure they're able to worship with us after we can gather together physically for worship. To that end, we have invested in new livestream equipment to improve the quality of our audio and video, and enable us to broadcast from our sanctuary. Funding for the livestream equipment came from our Gifts & Memorials fund. Thank you to all those who have contributed through the years to make funds available for special projects such as this.

When our shelter in place is over, our online worship services will continue. What a blessing to be able to reach out and connect more people with the love and hope of Jesus!



Week 1, an old phone rubber banded to a tripod.



Week 2, we moved to the Parlor for better sound.



By Easter Sunday, we had lights and a soundboard.

WHILE WE SHELTER IN PLACE

4 Ways to Worship

1

Watch on our website streaming page:
www.brecksvilleumc.com/streaming

2

Interact on Facebook:
www.Facebook.com/Brecksvilleumc

3

Listen by Phone:
1-844-855-4444 Pin: 433800#

4

Watch a rebroadcast on YouTube Premiere at 1 pm
www.YouTube.com/c/BrecksvilleUnitedMethodistChurch

With the community quarantine still in place, we encourage everyone to:
Stay home and #StopTheSpread.





CONNECTION GROUPS

are helping us stay connected. Each week, we have groups of people checking in with one another, helping one another as they're able, and sharing news of the fellowship. Ric Lesinski is leading a team of "gophers" who are ready, willing and able to run errands and make no contact deliveries. If you need help, let us know. If you're willing to make calls, let us know! As we move through this time of physical isolation, we do not need to do it alone. Email office@brecksvilleumc.com or call 440-526-8938



OUR BREAD MINISTRY

continues, with teams of volunteers collecting bread from a local bakery on Saturday mornings and delivering it to people in need. Thank you to the Brachna, Hastings, Miller and Kotnik Families for delivering bread to the Parma Food Pantry and St. Augustine's in April.



Like so many things, Mother's Day will be different this year. We won't be able to go out to brunch or take mom to church. But, if we think creatively, this holiday can be a special one.

If you can't be together, maybe you could...

- Buy her a Hanging Basket Voucher from the YSP Plant Sale! (see page 8)
- Create a playlist of her favorite songs and send it to her.
- Order her favorite meal and have it delivered.
- Watch a movie together. Choose a title and start it at the same time, and text each other throughout the film.
- Organize a Zoom, Skype or conference call with your siblings.
- Choose a time and go outside and star gaze together — over the telephone.
- Play an online video game together, or a board game app like Scrabble.
- Create a free online jigsaw puzzle at jigsawplanet.com and send it to her.
- Interview her and record her answers in a journal for the ages.

If you live in the same house, you could...

- Treat her to an at home spa day. Mail order a new robe and some fancy face masks and lotions and paint her fingernails.
- Good old breakfast in bed!
- Set up a "drive in movie" in your living room.
- Have a karaoke night and sing, sing, sing!
- Host a family painting party. Bring out her inner Picasso with cardboard and paints. (Bonus points if you all wear berets. And send us pictures!)

If your mother has passed away...

- Tell stories about her to the people that you love.
- Make some of her favorite foods and share her recipes with your family.
- Do something she loved to do, and remember doing it together.
- Light a candle and say a prayer

If you have a troubled relationship with your mom... it's OK not to celebrate. Or you could celebrate another person in your life who filled that role by telling them how much they mean to you.

No matter how you spend Mother's Day this year, may the day land gently!

BRECKSVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

EDUCATION

UPDATE

STAY CONNECTED IN OUR TIME APART

For our families...

- If you have kids or grandkids and are not receiving our **Monday emails**, reach out to Jenny at education@brecksvilleumc.com to be added to the list. The email contains a Bible story suggestion and lots of family discussion questions that relate to the story.
- **Wednesdays are our student Zoom meetups.** We spend the time catching up on the past week and talking a little more about our weekly story. Let Jenny know if you would like the Zoom invitation sent your way.
- **Children's Moments** during our Sunday morning worship time.

...For our adults...

- **Sign up for our daily scripture reading schedule.** The participants from our Sunday morning Lenten study have been receiving an email on Mondays that outlines some suggested readings and meditations. If you would like to join in let Jenny know by emailing her at education@brecksvilleumc.com.
- **Wednesday Evening Bible Study.** Join Pastor Heidi and friends as we dive into the book of Acts at 7 pm. Email pastor@brecksvilleumc.com for instructions on how to join in online or by telephone.

...and something for everyone:

Our Facebook Group - Brecksville United Methodist Church Group. If you think of Facebook as a digital house, our Facebook Page is like our front porch and our Facebook Group is like our living room. Come on in, sit down and enjoy conversation, celebration, inspiration and fun. Click the "join group" button on our page www.facebook.com/BrecksvilleUMC. Check in to our group on **Fridays at noon** for a Facebook Live segment called **'Finding God in Nature'**. Join us for a short devotion to see how God is moving in the world outside our door. If you can't be with us at noon you can replay it anytime! - *Jenny Gee, Director of Christian Education*

ABOUT VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Although we have no idea what to expect in the coming weeks and months, we are keeping VBS registration open with hopes that we will be able to gather together in some way this summer to sing, dance, learn and have fun praising God. For now, please register if you want to be the first to hear about plans going forward. Please do not send money.

ONLINE CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday

May 5 at 7 pm

RSVP to receive ZOOM Login Info
office@brecksvilleumc.com

4 WAYS TO GIVE



Give securely online

[onrealm.org/BrecksvilleMethodist/
give/now](https://onrealm.org/BrecksvilleMethodist/give/now)



Text "GiveBUMC" to 73256



Mail your gift to 65 Public Square,

*Choose Brecksville UMC as your beneficiary
when online shopping through Amazon
Smile.*



Prayer and Praise Notes

Request prayer through our Prayer
Chain. Call the Church Office
440.526.8938 or contact Elinor
Rowan at 440.230.1540
or email
rowanel33@gmail.com

TOGETHER WHEREVER

Youth Connecting ONLINE

Graduation Sunday

Graduates, during this strange time we want to celebrate your hard work and accomplishments! Please send a short bio (your plans for the fall, activities you participated in during school, and any other info you would like to share) with a picture of yourself to office@brecksvilleumc.com. During our Graduation Sunday in June we will feature you so our whole congregation can give you the props you deserve! We love you class of 2020!

Looking for scholarships? Go to gbhem.org for more information on how the United Methodist Church wants to help you in your education. Keep an eye on when applications come out and deadlines are due, don't miss out on this opportunity! We also have the Music and Worship scholarship from our very own church family, email music@brecksvilleumc.com to apply!

Together, Wherever—Still connecting online!

There are so many ways for our youth to connect online:

- Devotions on our Instagram every Tuesday and Thursday
- Virtual Youth Group on Instagram or Zoom every Sunday
- Sunday Service RE:Play on our Youtube every Sunday at 1 pm
- The Gathering Weekly newsletter sent to parents' inboxes every Friday at 7 am



Bingo LIVE! On Instagram

Dana and Jamie will be going live again on Instagram to play bingo, **May 3rd at 6 pm**. It's totally free to join and play! There may even be a secret theme for the night with trivia! Don't miss it, email Dana, youth@brecksvilleumc.com to RSVP and get your bingo card.

Weekly Newsletter Email

If you currently don't receive the weekly youth ministry newsletter sign up by letting Dana know at youth@brecksvilleumc.com. Our newsletter includes:

- Youth ministry updates
- Resources to help parents of teens on their journey in faith
- Recaps of our weekly devotionals and Bible explorations
- Encouragement for your week!

- Dana Schwendeman, Director of Youth Ministries

Confirmation

Confirmation is an opportunity offered to students in 8th grade and above, to have a personal exploration of what it means to be a Christian, and more specifically, a United Methodist. They are invited to learn more about scripture, church history, prayer, spiritual development, theology, mission, and the structural connections of the UMC. This learning takes place in Sunday School, with their mentors, during worship, on retreat, and in many other avenues throughout the year. The culmination of the confirmation journey ends with students deciding to claim their faith as their own and become full members of the United Methodist Church. Confirmation is a continuation of baptismal vows that parents make for their children, where students can now say for themselves, "yes, I want to follow Jesus and I choose to be a United Methodist."

In mid May, we celebrate Confirmation Sunday and welcome the year's confirmation class as full members of our church. This year, due to unique circumstances, we will be recognizing our confirmation class in May during our live streamed service and when it is safe for us all to gather together again, we will have our celebration with the confirmands in the sanctuary.

Please join us in congratulating our 2020 Confirmation class:

- Eliza Botzman
- Joseph Botzman
- Andrew Kubek
- Ryan Shijo
- Julianna Tait
- Alaina Teare



MILESTONES

News of the Fellowship

E-mail or phone Melanie with news to share!
office@brecksvilleumc.com
440-526-8938

I would like to thank everyone for their prayers and cards sent my way for my back surgery. I am happy to say I am pain free. Thank you Pastor Heidi for visiting me in the hospital and presenting me with a prayer shawl. I know it was made with love by women in our church. Every time I put it on I can feel God's arms around me.—*Kathy Sopka*



Greater Cleveland Food Bank

The Greater Cleveland Food Bank is doing astounding work in a time of great need. While volunteer packing events have been suspended, the Food Bank is using the help of the National Guard to prepare a record amount of food for distribution for those in need in this time of crisis.

If you know anyone who needs food or assistance, please have them call the Food Bank's Help Center at 216-738-2067 to speak to one of their very helpful Client Help Specialists. If you are interested in helping with food distribution, we have lists of organizations seeking help. Contact the church office!



Carissa Spitzer	1	Justin Bielinski	12	Aneira Watkins	21
Tracy Adanich	2	Doug Hurst	12	Bryn Watkins	21
Cindy Krause	2	Alainna Teare	12	Brian Culley	22
Karen Pace	2	Walt Walburn	12	Mark Hobzek	22
Hannah Botzman	3	Chris Wygonski	12	Bev Huber	23
Shelby Olszko	3	Michael Paroda	13	Nathan Hudacek	23
Julie Sparks	3	Nancy Sirianni	13	Michael Lee	23
Sandie Meyer	5	Nora Culley	14	Brett Hof	24
Barbara Ramundo	5	Danielle Fisher	14	Evan Jaite	24
Suzanne Blatnik	6	Wyatt Slifcak	14	Taylor Kwiatkowski	24
Eli Shively	7	Melanie Smith	15	Guinevere Pace	24
Landon Glenn	8	Noah Stacher	15	Tom Taylor	24
Stephanie Holmes	8	Emma Engelhardt	16	Gabrielle Croes	25
Patrick Magee	8	Harry Fox	16	Alan Scheufler	25
Lori Pasek	8	Donald Rickert	16	Kathy Sopka	25
Eric Chen	9	Lauren Sendrey	16	Carina Kosla	26
Jenny Gee	9	Matthew Dietrich	17	Alison Rickert	26
Scott Hastings	9	Diana Duke	17	Catherine Vastartis	26
Alison Bell	10	Lynn Hobzek	17	Greg Diver	27
Jack Drescher	10	Sara Meyer	17	Don Krolikowski	27
Russell Goodwin	10	Emily Kotnik	18	Jack Neville	27
Sandy Kovalik	10	Betty Fielden	20	Kate Burrows	28
Nancy Lee	10	Ava McFarlane	20	Dan Spitzer	28
Mike Stratis	10	Kirk Robinson	20	David Engler	29
Evan Croy	11	Ryan Wilson	20	Ava Pawlak	30
Bobby Hotaling	11	Ed Gugliucci	21	Clark Rechkemmer	31
Addy Pribble	11	Connor Mathewson	21		
Bill Rittman	11	Emily Miller	21		
Joseph Tereshko	11	Emma Vastartis	21		



As people of faith, we find God's presence in those who have been blessings to us. At our weekly staff meetings recently, prayers of thanks were lifted to God for the way lives are touched when we reach out to one another in service. People like Alan Scheufler, whose expertise allowed the church to understand financial resources available to us during this crisis; Ric Lesinski, our head "gopher", who organized delivery of Palms and Easter Flowers to our doorsteps, and all of the gophers who made those deliveries. You helped us all celebrate Holy Week in very special ways; Dave Brown, who's heading up our mowing team this year, and all of the folks who have stepped up to serve on a mowing team. In these strange times, we are so thankful for each of you and for all of the ways you lift up and support one another. Know that we are loved, cared about and prayed for every single day!

FAITH BUILD UPDATE



HANGING BASKETS FOR YOUTH SERVICE PROJECT

Hello, Habitat Faith Partners! Thank you for being part of the 2020 Faith Build. While we are unsure when our operations will be permitted to start back up, we want to give you a little update.

The Faith Build House has been assigned to 10801 Grandview Avenue in the Buckeye neighborhood of Cleveland. Habitat intends to build ten new houses on Grandview Avenue. The construction on six of the houses started last year and we have hopes to complete these homes this year. The Faith Build house (10801 Grandview) and three other homes will be started this year. This makes a total of 10 houses! You are changing a community.

Our 2019 Faith Build Families, Phillina and Ebony, are both doing well, although they have understandable anxiety. Phillina is home with her kids. She has an underlying health condition and is doing her best to social distance. Phillina's son, Derwin, turned 10. He told me that now that he is a decade, he has to make some changes in his life. He is not sure what the changes will be. I look forward to learning about the changes! Ebony continues to work as she works in healthcare. She is balancing the three kiddos and a job but says she is doing well. May she have continued energy!

Thank you for dedicating the 2020 Easter Offering to Faith Build. Your commitment is changing lives and changing communities! - *Kim Pride, Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity*

Adopt a Flower Bed

As thoughts turn to spring, the Trustees Committee is reaching out to the congregation for help providing love and care to our church gardens/flower beds. This is a great activity that can get you outdoors while you still maintain good distancing. Adopt a garden or portion of a garden to tend. The sprinklers can water most areas but help is needed with weeding and care. In addition, they are looking for plants to add color, interest and beauty to the church grounds. If anyone has perennials that would be appropriate for the church gardens to share, please contact the office.

Join The Mowing Team

Every spring and summer, we have teams of two who volunteer one day every 5 weeks or so to mow, trim and edge the church grounds. Dave Brown is the point person for the lawn mowing teams this year. Want to help out? Contact the office and they will put you in touch with Dave. Thank you!

- *Bob Lundholm, Chairperson, Board of Trustees*

Support our Youth Service Project,
and a local family owned business
in 5 easy steps.

1. Go online and order your basket (or baskets!) They're \$20 each.
2. Select to receive your voucher by mail or email. (If it's by email, you'll have to print it.)
3. Call Kollman's in Twinsburg and arrange a time for Kollman's Kurbside Pick Up.
4. Drive to Twinsburg and pick up your flowers.
5. Enjoy your flower!

Right now, the Youth Service Project is scheduled as planned.

But, even if that changes and we can't go this year, know that your purchase will support a future Youth Service Project Trip.

Questions? Contact Dana Schwendeman, our Director of Christian Education: 440-526-8938 or youth@brecksvilleumc.com





UM News
FAIR. FAITHFUL. TRUSTED.

Church leaders postpone 2020 General Conference

With the coronavirus disrupting lives worldwide, General Conference organizers determined they have no choice but to postpone The United Methodist Church's top legislative assembly.

The Minneapolis Convention Center — scheduled to host the 2020 General Conference — announced it is now canceling gatherings of 50 or more people through May 10. The shutdown covers the first five days of the denomination's 10-day meeting, which was set to draw 862 delegates, 66 bishops and others from four continents.

The commission's executive committee, which met by teleconference March 18, decided the venue's announcement meant that General Conference could no longer go forward May 5-15 as planned. However, commission members do not yet know how quickly they can announce new dates.

—**By Heather Hahn**
March 18, 2020 | *UM News*

AC 2020, YAC 2020 Postponed

Decision Coming Soon about 2020 Summer Camp

By Rick Wolcott*

The health and safety of East Ohio Conference clergy and laity are paramount. Bishop Tracy S. Malone, after prayerful discernment and in consultation with the Extended Cabinet, leadership of the Board of Ministry, and the Annual Conference secretary, has made the decision to postpone Clergy Executive Session and Annual Conference 2020 until the Fall.

Both Clergy Executive Session and Annual Conference will meet at Lakeside Chautauqua the last weekend in September.

Clergy Executive Session will meet from 11:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. on Friday, September 25. The 51st Session of Annual Conference will begin at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 26 and will conclude by 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 27.

In choosing new dates for the rescheduled Annual Conference session the deliberate decision was made to include Saturday as one of the meeting dates so that the conference will be more accessible to lay members. Lakeside is able to accommodate a weekend session because the rescheduled Annual Conference meets after the summer Chautauqua program season concludes.

Annual Conference members will gather September 26-27 guided by the theme *Bearing Fruit that Lasts: Called, Committed, Connected*. Worship, business, and fellowship will underscore the importance of being connected to God, to our neighbors, and to our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world and bearing fruit that lasts.

“There is great joy and anticipation felt by many of us as we prepare to connect for a time of holy conferencing after this extensive time of physical separation from one another,” Malone said. “God’s Spirit continues to move among us as we join together across the East Ohio Conference to share the Good News of the Gospel in creative and tangible ways.”

Youth Annual Conference will not meet at Lakeside Chautauqua this summer. The decision on the date and details regarding YAC 2020 will be provided after Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCYM) meets April 25. Leadership is mindful of the other important events in the lives of teens that are also being impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and will explore alternative options for youth across the Conference to connect virtually.

East Ohio Camps & Retreat Ministries leadership is moving closer to decisions about 2020 Summer Camp. It continues to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit and to gather information and direction from the Centers for Disease Control, the Ohio Department of Health, and Camps peers and advisors.

New information about decisions made regarding Annual Conference, Youth Annual Conference, Clergy Executive Session, and Summer Camp will be published in the Conference bi-weekly electronic newsletter E-News, and posted on the Conference website pages for **Annual Conference 2020**, **Youth Annual Conference 2020**, and **Summer Camp**.

**Rick Wolcott is director of Communications for the East Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church.*

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Socialize with us!

How are you doing?

Is there anything you need?

Contact us for help tuning in to worship services, for a copy of the Upper Room devotional, if you need an errand run, for prayer, or if you just want to say hello or hear a friendly voice!

Voicemail: 440-526-8938



Open Doors.

Welcoming all of God's children.

Brecksville United Methodist Church is called to the ministry of reconciliation. We embrace diversity as a gift. We celebrate our human family's diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, faith history, economic status, marital status, physical and mental ability, and education. We affirm that all people are created in the image of God and as beloved children of God, all are worthy of God's love and grace. We welcome the full inclusion of all people in the life and ministries of Brecksville United Methodist Church as we journey toward reconciliation through Christ.